Respiratory Illnesses

MARCH 1, 2024

CDC's website is being modified to comply with President Trump's Executive Orders.

# Risk Factors for Severe Illness from Respiratory Viruses

**WHAT TO KNOW**

- In addition to CDC's Respiratory Virus Guidance, there are several specific considerations for people who are at higher risk for severe illness.

## Overview

Many factors can increase someone's risk of getting very sick from a respiratory illness.

Illnesses caused by respiratory viruses like COVID-19, flu, and RSV can make anyone sick. However, there are a range of risk factors that can increase a person's chances of getting very sick (severe illness). Generally, people at higher risk of severe illness from respiratory viruses are older adults, young children, people with compromised immune systems, people with disabilities, and pregnant women.

## Making a plan

If you or someone around you has one or more risk factors for severe illness, using the prevention strategies described in CDC's Respiratory Virus Guidance is especially important. In addition, there are several specific considerations for people with certain risk factors for severe illness:

- Older adults
- Young children
- People with weakened immune systems
- People with disabilities

- Pregnant women

**Notice**

CDC offers separate, specific guidance for healthcare settings (COVID-19, flu, and general infection prevention and control). Federal civil rights laws may require reasonable modifications or reasonable accommodations in various circumstances. Nothing in this guidance is intended to detract from or supersede those laws.

SOURCES

**CONTENT SOURCE:**
National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD)